

Photo Essay: Demolition Of Old WNTC Studio Building

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65 years ago, Clarkson College was small school suffering the problem that faces most successful institutions at one time or another: it was

out of space and could not expand either its programs or the number of students it could accommodate. To help ease the crunch, a wood frame "tem-



(above) Remains of WNTC Studio; wrecked newsroom in background.

smitters of greater power were obtained, and it finally was provided with FM stereo capability. Not so long ago, the F.C.C. revoked its AM license so now it is only an FM cable operation. But once again, the pressures of the times changed the situation. WNTC was moved up to the hill last summer; it is now located in the basement of Hamlin-Powers. And the old "temporary" building is going to become Clarkson's next parking lot, at least by the looks of the damage that has already been done.

Last week, huge sections of the roof were cut out, most of the windows broken and the doors removed. Various people moved the last of the equipment WNTC still wanted up to the hill, and then cleared

out whatever was left. By Tuesday, the floors were covered with rubbish and scrap hounds were ripping out as much of the wood as possible for use in lofts and other construction projects. By the end of the week, the place had a totally skeletonized look of old junk that nobody wanted in a building that consisted of nothing more than a few haphazard 2-by-4s holding the rafters up.

But wandering around, one could see what the place used to look like..... It was easy to see where the old Tech room, the Air Studio, the Equipment Room, and the Newsroom used to be. It must have been a nice place at one time...

(below) "Tech Room." Natural illumination via holes in roof.



(above) Old WNTC studio last Fri. Location of call letters barely visible.

porary" building was constructed in the space immediately behind the place now called Old Main. Its original function was a forge shop, and the hearth chimney holes in the ceiling gave it a flavor it has retained to this day.

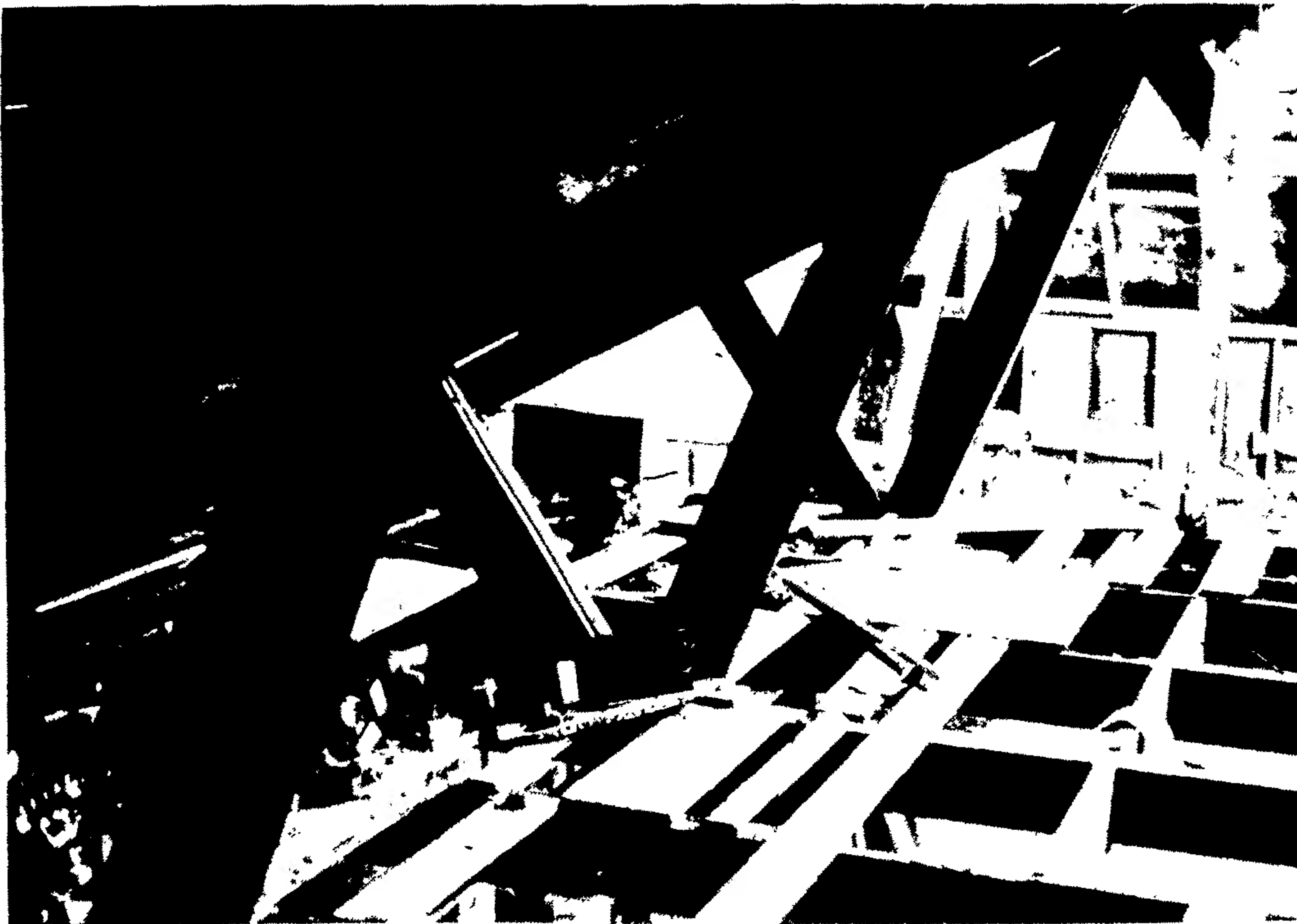
But in the years that followed, Clarkson was to make a transition from emphasizing manual skills towards teaching the theory behind the skills, and beyond. Once again, the building behind Old Main was put to use housing what could not be fit elsewhere. The forges were scrapped, scientific apparatus was moved in, and the structure became known as the Chem Annex.

Again, the times changed. The college had erected new

buildings to house the Chemistry Department, so the old building found another use. The Clarkson Electronic Society had founded a radio station, letters WNTC, which went on the air for the first time on March 27, 1948. It had started out on the second floor of one of the old executive buildings, but as this proved to be unsuitable for expansion, the loft of a barn at Potsdam State was acquired for the station. Finally, after the Chemistry Department had moved to its new quarters, WNTC took over part of the old temporary building. The other sections of it were used for storage.

WNTC remodeled its studios there several times, as it grew from a small AM-only station onwards. AM tran-

(below) WNTC Attic. Notice that the floor is missing!



(below) Smashed electrical fixture is probably the most valuable thing left.

